

NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

ONLINE TUTORING NOW AVAILABLE TO MORE B.C. STUDENTS

VANCOUVER – More B.C. students will be able to use online tutoring services in math, science and social studies through the Province's LearnNow BC virtual school, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

"We need to continue to explore new ways to improve student achievement," said Bond. "Online tutoring increases flexibility in how programs and services are delivered to students. That's why our existing online tutoring service will expand to provide more students with one-on-one help when they need it most – right before their provincial exams."

When LearnNow BC was first launched in October, the online tutoring service was available only to distributed learning students taking Math 10 or Science 10. The service has now been expanded to include all B.C. students taking Essentials of Math 10, Principles of Math 10, Science 10 and Social Studies 11.

Students will be able to access online course content, sample tests and tutoring services by visiting LearnNow BC at www.learnnowbc.gov.bc.ca. The expanded online tutoring service will be offered in four ways:

- Online tutors will be available via a chat room Sundays through Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. with extended hours in the months of January and June 2007 to provide additional support to students during provincial examination periods. The service will be provided through accredited teachers and peer tutors.
- "Live" workshops with accredited teachers will be featured nightly, followed by an online group discussion that will include a question and answer period on topics specific to that night's session. The live workshops will begin each evening at 7:30 p.m., with logins available as of 7:15 p.m.
- StudyBUZZ, available 24 hours a day, is a tool that allows students to test themselves and then provides them with a diagnosis that helps assess which areas of study require more practice or review.
- Charged up for Math and Charged up for Science provide students with 24-hours-a-day access to sample provincial exam questions, the most difficult of which are explained through streaming video clips.

"The world is changing and our approach to education has to change with it," said Bond. "Many students are already doing research over the Internet and through online library services. The enhanced online tutoring service will give them more tools to help them prepare for exams in January and June."

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In October 2006, the Province launched phase one of the LearnNow BC virtual school to provide students in grades 10 through 12 with more choice and flexibility in their courses, no matter where they live in British Columbia. Students in rural and remote areas of B.C. often cannot take the courses they want because the courses are not offered in their communities, and some students in larger communities may have trouble getting courses to fit their timetable or lifestyles.

LearnNow BC and the expanded online tutoring fulfils government's 2006 throne speech commitment to provide B.C. students with new options for learning and to ensure successful completion of their studies. Other recently announced technology services for students include the new virtual library reference service AskAway, the Rural Education Network, and a new shared services website that allows small, rural districts to purchase supplies at prices often only available for larger urban districts.

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